

AGN. NO. _____

MOTION BY SUPERVISOR YVONNE B. BURKE

January 11, 2005

CHILD DEATH

Child abuse prevention is at the core of Los Angeles County's commitment to keep children safe and protected. The recent death of a two month old child compels us to determine what more can be done to aid in the prevention of such tragedies. The Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) is committed to addressing problems with families and their needs. DCFS must continue to develop more comprehensive approaches to assuring child safety, while balancing the needs of children to remain in their own homes, where feasible. The Compton Project and the Point of Engagement service delivery models both rely on extended family involvement to achieve this goal.

The Compton Project has successfully utilized the Point of Engagement service delivery system, which has the goal of keeping children safely in their homes or when that is not possible, achieving permanency in a stable environment as soon as possible. The Point of Engagement service delivery system aims to provide comprehensive investigations of referrals through partnership with community-based service providers,

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in the areas of substance-abuse, mental health and domestic violence. The Point of Engagement model includes the team decision-making approach of community collaboration and full engagement of the family in development of the case plan, in order to achieve improved reunification, permanency and a reduced reliance on detentions. In this instance of a child's death, despite current efforts, the process of team decision making did not result in a safe environment for a vulnerable child. In retrospect, obvious clues were missed. The "team decision making concept" must be closely analyzed for flaws and those flaws must be addressed immediately.

I, THEREFORE MOVE THAT THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS:

Instruct the Department of Children and Family Services to develop a corrective action plan that will support current department-wide prevention efforts, and to report back to the Board within 90 days on the implementation of this corrective action plan, specifically regarding structured team decision-making and improvements in the quality of assessments.

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